

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below. A complete listing of the claims, including their current status identifier, is set forth below.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method comprising:
contacting a hepatitis C virus (HCV) NS4B nucleotide binding motif (NBM) polypeptide NS4B protein with a candidate agent and HCV RNA; and
determining an effect of said candidate agent on on:
(i) a GTPase activity or a nucleotide binding activity of said NS4B protein polypeptide; and
(ii) an HCV RNA binding activity of said NS4B protein,
determining an effect of said candidate agent on replication of HCV.

2-5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said candidate agent is a nucleotide analog.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said nucleotide analog is a non-hydrolysable nucleotide.

8. (Canceled).

9. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 24 claim 1, wherein said HCV is a subgenomic or full length HCV replicon.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 24, claim 1 wherein said method comprises determining an effect of said candidate agent on HCV replication in a huh7 cell.

11-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, claim 1 wherein said method comprises assaying said candidate agent on HCV replication in a liver cell line or primary liver cell.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein said HCV is live virus or a replicon thereof.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining an effect of said candidate agent on replication of HCV.